

WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Central Committee

Minutes of the Forty-Second Meeting

Canberra, Australia

18 and 21-22 February 1991





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
World Council of Churches

<https://archive.org/details/fortysecondmeeti00unse>

**Central Committee
of the World Council of Churches**

Minutes of the Forty-Second Meeting

Canberra, Australia

18 and 21-22 February 1991

**WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES
150, route de Ferney
1211 Geneva 2
1991**

ISBN 2-8254-1031-4

c 1991 by the World Council of Churches

150, route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

Printed in Switzerland

CONTENTS

Opening actions - 18 February 1991

I	Call to order	1
II	Opening Worship	1
III	Roll call	1

Appointment of Nominations Committee	1
--	---

Closing Actions	2
-----------------------	---

*

Opening Actions - 21 February 1991

I	Call to Order	3
II	Agenda	3
III	Minutes	3
IV	Roll call and seating of Substitutes	4

Presidents	4
------------------	---

Report of Nominations Committee	5
---------------------------------------	---

I	Officers	5
II	Executive Committee	6

Process towards September Central Committee meeting ...	8
---	---

Election of the Search Committee for a new General Secretary	11
Other Nominations	12
I WCC members of the Joint Working Group	12
II Faith and Order Standing Commission	13
Review of Constitution and Rules	15
Assembly follow-up	16
Public Issues: statements on	
- Internal Conflicts	17
- Pacific	18
- Baltic States	20
Appeals on Sri Lanka and on El Salvador	20
Dates of next meetings	21
Closing Actions	21

APPENDIX

List of participants	22
----------------------------	----

OPENING ACTIONS - 18 February 1991

I Call to Order

The meeting of the Central Committee was called to order by the General Secretary, Dr Emilio Castro, at 20.40 hrs on Monday 18 February 1991.

II Introduction and Opening Worship

The General Secretary welcomed the new Central Committee, and invited the Most Rev. Michael Peers to open with prayer.

As the Presidents had not yet been elected, the General Secretary invited Bishop Dr J. Henry Okullu, a senior member of the Central Committee, to act as Moderator for this session.

III Roll Call

In view of the brief time available for the meeting, the full roll call was not taken.

APPOINTMENT OF NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The General Secretary explained that the constitutional reason for this meeting was the appointment of a Nominations Committee, whose task was to propose nominations for a Moderator and two Vice-moderators, and for the members of the Executive Committee.

The General Secretary reminded the Central Committee that they would also be required to appoint a Search Committee for the new General Secretary to be elected by Central Committee in 1992.

A list of proposed members of the Nominations Committee was presented, which was approved as follows:

Ms Rosangela Jarjour (Moderator)	Reformed	Cyprus
Mr Charles Ajalat	Eastern Orthodox	USA
Ms Kathryn Bannister	Methodist	USA
Ms Marion Best	United	Canada
Mr John Briggs	Baptist	UK
Dr Alexei Buevsky	Eastern Orthodox	USSR
Ms Beatrice Danquah	Reformed	Ghana
Rev. E. Farfan Figueroa	Pentecostal	Chile
Ms Virginia Gcabashe	Methodist	S. Africa
Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez	Anglican	Barbados, W.I.
Rev. Edea Kidu	United	Papua New Guinea
Prof. George Koshy	United	India
Mr Peter Lodberg	Lutheran	Denmark
Ms Jan Malpas	Anglican	Australia
Rev. David Mandeng	Reformed	Cameroon
Ms Faith Mwondha	Anglican	Uganda
Rev. Dr W. Rusch	Lutheran	USA
Bishop Serapion	Oriental Orthodox	Egypt
Drs Aukje Westra	Reformed	Netherlands

*

The General Secretary was asked to provide a detailed agenda for the Central Committee meeting on 21 and 22 February. There was some discussion as to whether it was necessary to meet for two full days, and it was decided to make every effort to complete the business by midday on 22 February.

CLOSING ACTIONS

Bishop Okullu closed the meeting with prayer.

OPENING ACTIONS - 21 February 1991

I Call to Order

The meeting of the Central Committee was called to order at 9.15 hrs on Thursday 21 February 1991. There being no President from the host country, Australia, the General Secretary invited Bishop Vinton Anderson to act as moderator until the new Officers had been elected. Bishop Anderson led the opening worship.

At a later session the same day, the newly elected Moderator, Archbishop Aram Keshishian, took the chair. Speaking on behalf of the new Officers, he said that they accepted their election with humility and a profound sense of responsibility; this was a moment of thanksgiving to God who had made them worthy to become humble servants of the ecumenical movement.

He expressed gratitude to the outgoing Officers - Bishop Heinz Joachim Held, His Eminence Chrysostomos of Myra, and Dr Sylvia Talbot - who had served the ecumenical cause for the past eight years with devotion and commitment. The Archbishop affirmed the intention of the new Officers to work together as one team.

II Agenda

The General Secretary presented the proposed agenda, which was approved. A number of items were also tabled for a future meeting of the Central Committee, including a full evaluation of the Assembly and consideration of a Resolution from the Youth at the Assembly.

There was some discussion on when to take time to consider the paper "Reflections of Orthodox Participants" which was shared with the Assembly delegates, but it was decided that it could more usefully be discussed on another occasion. Some Orthodox representatives pointed out that it was intended for reflection and information rather than discussion.

III Minutes

Since the minutes of the previous meeting of the Central Committee held in Geneva, Switzerland, 25-30 March 1990, had not yet been circulated to members of the new Central Committee, approval was held over until the next meeting.

IV Roll Call and Seating of Substitutes

The General Secretary called the roll, including Presidents, members of the Central Committee, and stewards. The seating of substitutes was approved as follows:

Ms Connie Gates for Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss (on 22 Feb.)
 Dr jur. (Ms) Helga Gilbert for Bishop Dr H.-G. Jung
 Rev. Michael Ingham for Most Rev. Michael G. Peers
 (on 21 Feb.)

Ms Anoush Nakashian for Ms Nancy Basmajian
 Rt Rev. James Ottley for Most Rev. E. Browning
 Ms Rhonda Pittman for Dr Donald Miller (on 22 Feb.)
 Rev. Staccato Powell for Dr Shirley Liddell (on 22 Feb.)
 Rev. Dr Bruce W. Robbins for Bishop Melvin Talbert
 (on 22 Feb.)

The General Secretary then introduced the staff members present, indicating their functions.

Bishop Hannon asked that a directory with photos of Central Committee members and staff be prepared as was done in the past, because he had found this to be a helpful means of communication.

PRESIDENTS

The Assembly had elected seven Presidents of the Council but it was felt necessary to add an additional one in order for all regions to be represented on the Presidium. The Assembly therefore recommended that the present Rule II 1. be amended as follows:

"The Assembly shall elect one or more Presidents but the number of Presidents shall not exceed eight."

Due to the requirement to provide 24 hours' notice of a change in the Rules, the Central Committee was requested to take action on this recommendation by the Assembly.

The Central Committee agreed to the change in Rule II 1. as quoted above. It then voted in favour of electing Dr Aaron Tolen, Cameroon, as the eighth President.

REPORT OF NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

In a closed session, the General Secretary explained that the first task of the Central Committee at this session was to elect the Officers (1 Moderator and 2 Vice-moderators), and then to elect 15 members of the Executive Committee, who, together with the 8 Presidents, make a total of 26 members.

It was decided that the vote would be by written ballot.

I Officers

Ms Jarjour, Moderator of the Nominations Committee, presented the report. Aware that, since the formation of the Council, there had not so far been a moderator from among the Orthodox nor a woman moderator, the Committee had sought primarily for an Orthodox. Ms Jarjour presented the proposals of the Nominations Committee for the Officers as follows:

Moderator:	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Orthodox Church in America
Vice-Moderators:	Ephorus Dr S.A.E. Nababan, Batak Protestant Christian Church, Indonesia Rev. Nélide Ritchie, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina

In response to a request for some indications about the qualities required by those appointed, the General Secretary quoted from the minutes of the Central Committee held in Vancouver, August 1983, (p.5) as follows:

The Officers are "the servants of the Central Committee, ensuring that its decisions and the work of the Executive Committee were faithful to the mandate of the WCC. While they must be representative of their own churches, their primary loyalty as Officers must be to what the churches have asked the Council to do and they must be collectively concerned for the total wellbeing of the Council. They were empowered to make many important decisions between meetings of the Executive and Central Committees, and were the persons with whom the General Secretary had to consult most closely on a wide variety of matters concerning the Council, especially those which were of great difficulty and confidentiality. The Officers had to be seen as a team, bringing different gifts and experiences and complementing each other."

The Officers appointed at this meeting would have to give strong support to the General Secretary and to whomever might be elected to succeed him.

The General Secretary added that persons appointed should be able to lead the Council in orderly debate according to the processes of the Central Committee and of the Assembly.

There was general consent that the new moderator be from the Orthodox family. A second nomination - that of Archbishop Keshishian - was made from the floor, and in the absence of the two candidates, considerable discussion ensued. For the benefit of those who did not know them, several speakers made reference to their qualities and capabilities for the task.

There followed a full discussion with regard to the selection of the Vice-moderators and alternative names were proposed from the floor. Some felt one of the Vice-moderators should be a lay person, others wanted a young person. A series of ballots took place and the following Officers were elected:

Moderator:	Archbishop Aram Keshishian, Armenian Apostolic Church (Cilicia), Lebanon
Vice-Moderators:	Ephorus Dr S.A.E. Nababan, Batak Protestant Christian Church, Indonesia Rev. Nélide Ritchie, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina

Thanks were expressed to Bishop Anderson, who handed over the chair to the newly elected Moderator.

II Executive Committee

The General Secretary reported that a system of rotation of members of the Executive Committee had been agreed to by the outgoing Central Committee, but as this would only start functioning in two-three years' time, he suggested that, in view of the brief time available, the schedule of rotation be worked out at a subsequent meeting of Central Committee.

Ms Jarjour presented the proposed list of members of the Executive Committee and moved that this be accepted.

In discussion, attention was drawn to the fact that no name was proposed from the Pacific region, nor from francophone-West Africa, though it was pointed out that there is a President from both the Pacific region and from the Cameroon.

These regions should be granted priority of representation when the time came for the first rotation of membership of the Executive Committee. It was also suggested that there be an Arabic-speaker from the Middle East in view of the importance of the Palestinian issue. Further, there should be greater youth representation on the Committee.

With the understanding that it is impossible to get a fully representative and balanced membership in such a small group, the Central Committee approved the list of members of the Executive Committee as presented:

Metropolitan Bartholomeos of Chalcedon, Ecumenical
Patriarchate, Turkey
Mrs Marion Best, United Church of Canada
Mr John Briggs, Baptist Union of Great Britain
Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina, Romanian
Orthodox Church
Ms Beatrice Danquah, Presbyterian Church of Ghana
Mrs Virginia Gcabashe, Methodist Church of Southern Africa
Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez, Church of the Province of the West
Indies, Barbados
Rev. Dr Margot Kaessmann, Evangelical Church of Germany
Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk, Russian Orthodox Church
USSR
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Orthodox Church in America
Miss Maryssa Mapanao, United Church of Christ in the
Philippines
Rt Rev. Dr J. Henry Okullu, Church of the Province of
Kenya
Ms Birgitta Rantakari, Evangelical-Lutheran Church of
Finland
Bishop Melvin Talbert, United Methodist Church, USA
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilus, Mar Thoma Church of
Malabar, India

The General Secretary referred to the importance of the role of the Finance Sub-committee of the Executive Committee, and reported that Ms Birgitta Rantakari had been nominated as Moderator of the Finance Committee; this was agreed.

At a later session, the Moderator expressed thanks to the members of the Nominations Committee for their work, which had had to be fitted into a very brief space of time. He explained that the responsibility for nominations now belonged to the newly appointed Executive Committee, which acts as the Nominations Committee of the Central Committee.

Ms Welch expressed disappointment at the difficulties encountered in the process of these elections, both in this meeting of the Central Committee and during the Assembly. She expressed hope that it would be possible to evolve a process that is less painful and more business-like for the future.

PROCESS TOWARDS SEPTEMBER CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Ms Ritchie, Vice-moderator, called on the General Secretary who spoke of the work to be done in translating the visions of the Assembly into concrete programme emphases for the future work of the Council, keeping in mind our human and financial possibilities. For this purpose, it was proposed to invite the Executive Committee together with a number of others appointed by the Central Committee on the basis of their expertise and knowledge of WCC programmes, to meet in Geneva during July 1991. This group would have as its mandate to translate the proposals from the Assembly into programmatic lines; it would then prepare proposals for the Central Committee in September on priorities and programmes in the light of financial possibilities.

Dr Crow stressed the importance of the process and the need for all members of the Central Committee to understand what is at stake. He felt it was critical that such a group aim to reflect not only what is coming from the Assembly but to reflect on the very nature of the Council. There are many new perspectives and new ideas to be appraised, but it will also be necessary to take some time to gain understanding of the true nature of the WCC as a fellowship of churches.

Members of the Committee welcomed the proposal. A number of questions were raised for clarification to which the General Secretary responded. With regard to current discussions on possible restructuring, it was his hope that a definite proposal could be brought for decision by Central Committee in September. A professional firm specialising in work with non-profit-making bodies was in process of making a study of the Council's financial organisation and would provide advice as to how to achieve a more realistic management system.

Ms Bazett, speaking on behalf of the differently abled, asked that note be taken of the request in their statement to the Assembly that they be represented at both the meeting of this group and at the Central Committee in September 1991.

A list of proposed membership of the group - in addition to the members of the Executive Committee - was considered and a number of changes suggested. The intention in the first place was to include persons with some experience of the WCC's programmatic work, rather than simply to ensure appropriate balances.

Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Peristerion felt the task required of this group should be carried out by the Central Committee itself. The General Secretary pointed out that the question was not whether to invite experts - he could do that at any time - but to ask for assistance in selecting whom to invite.

Mr Birmelé pointed out that the July group has an advisory function only and that the final decisions will in any case be taken by the Central Committee.

Dr Love, as a member of the outgoing Executive Committee, explained that, at the last two assemblies, 'core groups' of commissions and working groups were appointed. Staff had then convened these groups, requesting members to help interpret the programmatic lines coming from the assembly. This new proposal was an attempt on the part of the Executive Committee to integrate the Central Committee, through its Executive Committee, with that 'core group' process.

It was decided to refer the proposed list of membership for this group to the Executive Committee for further study.

At a later session the Central Committee received a revised list and discussed some additional changes in an attempt to improve the balances as this was felt by many to be as important as expertise on specific emphases of the Council's work.

The Central Committee voted in favour of inviting the following persons to the meeting in July, together with the members of the Executive Committee:

Dr Agnes Abuom	Anglican	Tanzania
Ms Elizabeth Aguilar	United	USA
Dr Elizabeth Amoah	Methodist	Ghana
Mr Maged Attia	O. Orthodox	Australia
Rev. John Bluck	Anglican	New Zealand
Ms Cristina Bosenberg	United	Argentina
Rev. John Brown	United	Australia
Ms Omega Bula	United	Zambia

Rev. Yvonne Delk	United	USA
Prof. Diana Eck	Methodist	USA
Ms Donnalie Edwards	Anglican	West Indies
Dr Talapusi Faitala	Reformed	Fiji
Dr Bastian Fortman	Reformed	Netherlands
Mr Willem Hanse	Methodist	Namibia
Prof. Stanley Harakas	E. Orthodox	USA
Bishop Jonas Jonson	Lutheran	Denmark
Rev. Anna Langerak	Lutheran	Costa Rica
Dr Janice Love	Methodist	USA
Bishop Moussa	O. Orthodox	Egypt
Dr Daleep Mukarji	United	India
Dr Park, Jong-Wha	Reformed	Korea
Rev. David Perry	Anglican	USA
Ms Erika Schwob-Sturm	Reformed	Switzerland
Ms Nenevi Seddoh	Reformed	Togo
Prof. Mary Tanner	Anglican	UK
Ms Mary Thomas	O. Orthodox	India
Archbishop Timotheos	O. Orthodox	Ethiopia
Ms Rua Turner	Anglican	New Zealand
Ms Anne Teveter	Lutheran	Norway

Dr Sherry stressed the importance of this group for the future of the WCC and expressed concern lest the specific concerns and strong expertise of these persons overwhelm members of the Executive Committee, many of whom are new to the Council's work. He urged that this be taken into consideration when the agenda is drawn up.

He also urged that recommendations coming from the floor of the Central Committee be shaped specifically enough for action to be taken on them, otherwise members would feel a lack of involvement.

Finally Dr Sherry asked that there be some attempt to share the results of the July meeting with the churches so that their response can be fed into the process prior to the Central Committee meeting in September.

★

Dr Ajalat said that many members were dissatisfied by the nominations process both at the Assembly and in the Central Committee. Critical consideration should be given to finding ways to improve this in the restructuring process. He suggested that more authority be given to the leadership for this kind of selection process.

ELECTION OF THE SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR A NEW GENERAL SECRETARY

It was reported that the General Secretary would reach retirement age in 1992 and the outgoing Executive Committee had recommended that a Search Committee be appointed now in order to have sufficient time to do its work. The election would take place during the 1992 meeting of the Central Committee. The Search Committee would consist of the two Vice-moderators together with ten persons elected by Central Committee from among its own members, plus six additional members appointed by the Executive Committee to assure the necessary balances.

Some members felt such an important matter should not be acted upon until there had been sufficient time for proper reflection. In view of the brief time available, however, there was no possibility of delaying the process. Dr Crow asked that some advice be given to the Central Committee as to the gifts and skills required in a general secretary: this would be helpful in appointing the Search Committee.

The General Secretary enumerated some of the requirements he saw as important: someone who is perceived as the embodiment of the fellowship which the Council is; someone who will be responsible for the staff and for administration, as well as for the work of the governing bodies; who can articulate the vision of the Council and who can encourage those involved in its work to grow towards this common vision; someone who is a pastor who can assume the symbolic function, and who can offer encouragement to churches going through situations of crisis.

A written ballot took place, each person listing ten names from among those eligible to serve.

At a later closed session, it was reported that the Executive Committee, at its meeting on the evening of Thursday 21 February 1991, received the results of the ballot. The first ten names were declared elected members of the Search Committee; should any of these be unable to serve, however, the next person on the list would be eligible to take the vacant place.

Dr Janice Love (Moderator), United Methodist Church USA
Rt Rev. J. Henry Okullu, Church of the Province of Kenya
Dr Paul A. Crow, Jr., Disciples of Christ, USA
OKR Walter Arnold, Evangelical Church in Germany
Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos, Methodist Church of Brazil
Prof. George Koshy, Church of South India
Dr Birgitta Larsson, Church of Sweden
Prof. Park Jong-Wha, Presbyterian Church in the Rep.
of Korea
Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez, Church of the Province of the
West Indies
Metropolitan Kirill, Russian Orthodox Church

ex-officio: Ephorus Dr S.A.E. Nababan) Vice-
Rev. Nélida Ritchie) moderators

The Executive Committee, in its capacity as Nominations Committee of the Central Committee, proposed six additional names required to ensure the appropriate balances. After some discussion, the Central Committee approved the following additional members for the Search Committee:

Archbishop N. Bozabalian, Armenian Apostolic Church
(Etchmiadzin)

Mrs Rosangela Jarjour, National Evangelical Synod of
Syria and Lebanon

Mrs Nagula Kathindi, Church of the Province of
Southern Africa

Bishop Nifon of Ploiesti, Romanian Orthodox Church

Rev. Sela Taufatofua, Methodist Church in Tonga

Ms Kristine Thompson, Presbyterian Church (USA)

OTHER NOMINATIONS

I WCC Members of the Joint Working Group between the
World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church

Dr Nababan, Vice-moderator, presented the names proposed by the Executive Committee for membership of the Joint Working Group (JWG). He reminded the Central Committee that, since only six members were being appointed at this time, it was felt that competence should take precedence over balance in the selection of members. Archpriest Kishkovsky pointed out that although Europe was not represented among the names proposed, the two staff members related to the JWG (Prof. Sabev and Dr Gassmann) are both from Europe.

The Central Committee approved the following membership of the JWG:

Metropolitan Elias Audi - Co-Moderator -	Patriarchate of Antioch
Rt Rev. Prof. Kwesi Dickson	Methodist Church, Ghana
Mrs Rubye Gayle	Jamaica Council of Churches
Rev. (Mrs) Lee, Ching-Chee	Church of Christ, Hong Kong (Hong Kong Christian Council)
Rev. Dr William Rusch	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Bishop Serapion	Coptic Orthodox Church, Egypt

Alternate

Pastor Jorge Domingues	Methodist Church in Brazil
------------------------	----------------------------

Consultants from various regions, churches, ecumenical bodies and WCC staff would be invited to attend JWG meetings according to specific needs of the agenda and appropriate balances.

II Faith and Order Standing Commission (part membership)

The General Secretary explained that, due to possible forthcoming structural changes, the Central Committee was not at this time being asked to appoint members of commissions and working groups. However, in view of the World Conference on Faith and Order scheduled for 1993, it was important that part of the membership of the Faith and Order Commission be appointed immediately. A list had been drawn up in consultation with the churches by the former Faith and Order Standing Commission according to the specific bylaws of the Commission.

A number of additional proposals of names were made from the floor. The General Secretary pointed out that, according to the constitution, the Standing Commission of Faith and Order has the task of acting as nominations committee, and any names proposed by Central Committee would have to be sent back for confirmation by the churches and by the former Standing Commission. This is a special case, and the task of the Central Committee is to act on the names proposed.

Mr Robbins felt it was not helpful to appoint only part of the membership of a commission and proposed that a Preparation Committee be named for the time being and the full

Commission be appointed only in September. The General Secretary explained that the intention of only appointing a part of the commission is to give opportunity for an overview in appointing membership of all commissions and working groups in September. He did not see this as weakening the work of Faith and Order, but stressed the importance of maintaining a consultative body during this interim period.

The list of 15 names (half the membership) was approved as submitted:

Metropolitan Bartholomew of Chalcedon	Ecumenical Patriarchate
Rev. Janet Crawford	Church of the Province of New Zealand
Rev. Martin Cressey	United Reformed Church, UK
Rev. Dr Paul A. Crow, Jr.	Disciples of Christ, USA
Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia & Bukovina	Romanian Orthodox Church
Rev. Prof. Duncan Forrester	Church of Scotland
Prof. Lee, Kyung Sook	Methodist Church of Korea
Rev. Dr Melanie May	Church of the Brethren, USA
Rev. Racquel Rodriguez	Lutheran Church of El Salvador
Ms Veronica Swai	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania
Dr Mary Tanner	Church of England
Rev. Prof. Jean Tillard, OP	Roman Catholic Church
Dr Yeow Choo Lak	Presbyterian Church in Singapore
Prof. Yemba Kekumba	Church of Christ in Zaire, Methodist Community
a young theologian, preferably from Eastern Europe	

It was further reported that, with the full support of her church, Dr Mary Tanner had been nominated as moderator of the new Faith and Order Commission.

There followed a debate as to whether the moderator should be appointed at this present meeting or at the September meeting of the Central Committee; it was agreed to act on the matter forthwith.

Dr Paul Crow was proposed as an alternative candidate for moderator. He withdrew his name, however, because he was in full support of the nomination of Dr Tanner.

Dr Gassmann, Director of Faith and Order, explained that, although the outgoing Standing Commission had prepared a full list of 30 names for membership of the new Commission, it had been decided to present only 15 names at this time. This group would now act as Faith and Order's nominations committee for the Plenary Commission to be appointed by Central Committee in September.

With regard to the nomination of Dr Tanner as moderator, he assured the Central Committee that there had been a full debate in the former Standing Commission, in the presence of Orthodox members, and there was a strong feeling that she represents an integrating theological position and would thus be well suited to lead the Commission during the coming years. There was no question of her taking a dominating position: the Commission is a team of theologians trying to bring the different confessional and theological positions into dialogue and perspective for the whole of the WCC.

The Central Committee approved the appointment of Dr Mary Tanner as Moderator of the Faith and Order Commission.

REVIEW OF CONSTITUTION AND RULES

In response to a question about the membership of commissions and working groups, the General Secretary explained that the churches had already submitted a considerable number of names of persons they would wish to see serving on the various programme-related groups that would have to be appointed in September. He reaffirmed that full consultation had already taken place with the churches about the appointment of the members of the Faith and Order Commission, emphasising that such consultation must always take place.

Ms Malpas moved that, as part of the restructuring process, a constitutional lawyer and other suitable persons be appointed to look into the Constitution and Rules of the WCC and its commissions to make them consistent, straight forward and workable.

The General Secretary pointed out that the Assembly had already requested a careful reconsideration of the bylaws of the various commissions in order to achieve a more coherent whole, but that this did not necessarily require the services of a lawyer.

The Central Committee voted in favour of such a review, with the understanding that it would affect procedures but would not touch the Basis nor the Aims and Functions of the Council.

Ms Westra offered to help staff in preparing a paper for discussion by Central Committee in September.

ASSEMBLY FOLLOW-UP

Public Issues

A. Dr Love, co-moderator of the Assembly Public Issues Committee, first presented a motion of personal privilege. She informed the Central Committee that Mr Ninan Koshy, Director of the Commission on International Affairs for the past ten years, would be leaving the service of the World Council of Churches at the end of June 1991. She proposed the following resolution for incorporation in the minutes, which was received with applause:

Ninan Koshy has served the World Council of Churches with wisdom, strength and grace for 17 years in the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), ten of them as its Director.

Ninan Koshy's commitment to ecumenism is long-standing. He was a youth delegate at the Uppsala Assembly in 1968 and served as the General Secretary of the Student Christian Movement of India 1968-1973. His skills gained earlier as a journalist and then as a Professor of English at Bishop Moore College at the University of Kerala have enhanced his considerable contribution to the ecumenical movement. His academic background includes a work on Caste in the Indian Church, which remains highly regarded decades later by academics and specialists.

Within the life of the WCC, Ninan Koshy's tireless leadership is evident far beyond his service in CCIA - in the Asia Task Force, as Acting Deputy General Secretary of Unit II, in numerous other committees and task forces, and, most importantly, as adviser to the General Secretary.

Ninan Koshy's life is deeply rooted in his personal faith out of which he has given guidance to the WCC's witness in international affairs. Exercising careful and discerning analysis, Ninan Koshy has provided pivotal leadership in facilitating member churches' relationships to each other and the Council, and in churches' relationships to the United Nations and other governmental bodies.

The Central Committee gives thanks to God for the work and witness of Ninan Koshy and expresses its profound gratitude for his commitment to ecumenism and his exceptional contribution to the World Council of Churches.

B. Dr Love then presented the remaining public statements which the Assembly had not had time to consider in detail. (These have since been widely circulated, incorporating the amendments made by Central Committee, together with those adopted by the Assembly; they are therefore not reproduced again here).

1. Statement on Internal Conflicts

Dr Love moved adoption of the statement.

Archimandrite Giannopoulos asked that an appeal be included to the government of the State of Israel in order to stop attempts to change the demographic and religious character of Jerusalem, in particular the Old City.

Prof. Gerka asked that reference be made to the problems being encountered with regard to the Uniates and the conflict between Orthodox and Catholic Churches in a number of areas.

Dr Love explained that this particular statement is intended to be in general terms, analysing the nature of internal conflicts but deliberately not mentioning specific places or conflicts. She agreed that the two questions raised were of great importance, and proposed that the Central Committee ask the Officers to follow up on these two matters, taking into account their grave complexity and the seriousness with which they affect member churches.

The Central Committee adopted the statement on Internal Conflicts.

2. Statement on the Pacific

Before presentation of this statement, Mr Rusterholz informed the Central Committee that, in order to follow up on the recommendations made in this statement without delay and to encourage other individuals, parishes and churches to undertake concrete steps, 75 Europeans at the Assembly had committed themselves to a special relationship with the churches in the Pacific in order to strengthen the bonds of fellowship with them by defining their cause. The text was as follows:

"The Assembly has been an occasion for representatives from the Pacific Islands to share with delegates from other parts of the world their concerns about their future. As representatives from churches in Europe, we realise that the causes of several of the critical developments the Pacific Islands are facing lie in Europe. We point to the following three:

- the use of Pacific Islands by European nations (France) for nuclear testing and dumping of nuclear waste;
- the beginning of the destruction of chemical weapons and toxic waste on Johnston Atoll, and
- above all, the 'greenhouse effect' and the ensuing climate changes which, in the words of the Second World Climate Conference, could threaten survival in small island states.

"These threats create an atmosphere of insecurity in the Pacific Islands which the industrialised countries of the North must not ignore. In particular, we have to realise that the patterns of energy consumption in European countries contribute significantly to the process of global warming with its probable disastrous consequences.

"Therefore, as representatives of Europe, we want to pledge solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Pacific Islands; together with all those in our churches already committed to a special relationship with the churches in the Pacific we want to strengthen the bonds of fellowship with them by:

- defending their cause within our own countries;
- advocating their right to a nuclear free Pacific;

- opposing the dumping of nuclear and toxic waste outside our own countries;
- promoting measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions by an annual rate of at least 2%."

This was signed by 75 persons.

Bishop Boseto responded in the following terms:

"It is with the deepest humility and sincere gratitude that we, on behalf of the Pacific delegation, welcome and accept this solemn pledge of commitment and solidarity from our sisters and brothers from Europe. Seldom in the past have we in the Pacific Islands received a direct and collective empathy in response to our pleas for the maintenance of the integrity of our fragile environment.

"This has not been due to lack of trying on our part. At every conceivable church and ecumenical gathering we have sung our laments and wept our tears of grief.

"In response, resolutions are adopted, declarations are made and ovations are heard. Alas, our pleas are forgotten the moment the clapping stops.

"So we say 'Tank yu Tumas' to our sisters and brothers from Europe. In doing so we also invite our sisters and brothers from other industrialised countries of the North to join us in this pledge of fellowship.

"But we hasten to add that the concerns of the peoples of the Pacific go beyond the conservation of the environment per se. We are also concerned about the indigenous peoples of the Pacific who are made second class citizens in the land of their ancestors.

"We are also concerned about the increasing militarisation of the Pacific region and the individual countries. We are concerned too about the abuse of human rights in the countries of our region. We are also concerned about our sisters and brothers who still live under the yoke of colonialism.

"Together these concerns make up the integrity of God's creation in the Pacific.

"So, with these additional pleas and the deepest gratitude, we from the Pacific bid farewell to you all, especially our sisters and brothers from Europe."

(signed) Bishop Leslie Böseto, Chairman of PCC,
Bishop Ellison Pogo, Moderator of Pacific
delegation to WCC Seventh Assembly.

Dr Love then presented the statement on the Pacific, and the Central Committee voted in favour of adopting it.

3. Statement on the Baltic States

Dr Love moved adoption of this statement. A number of amendments were proposed, which were noted and incorporated in the final text. Particular concern was expressed about the situation in Georgia, and it was suggested that a group of church leaders be sent to the region on a fact-finding mission to see what the Council might do to help in these several difficult situations. Dr Love responded that such a visit was already planned.

The Central Committee voted in favour of adopting the statement on the Baltic States.

4. Appeal on Sri Lanka

Dr Love moved adoption of this appeal. With the addition of the phrase "including those who have taken refuge in India or other countries", the Central Committee voted in favour of adopting it.

5. Appeal on El Salvador

Dr Love moved adoption of this appeal, and the Central Committee voted in favour of adopting it.

*

Dr Love expressed appreciation to the Central Committee for completing the task which the Assembly had been unable to do. The Moderator thanked the Public Issues Committee for its work in preparing the statements. He concluded by expressing good wishes on behalf of the Officers and the members of the Central Committee to Mr Ninan Koshy.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The following dates were agreed:

3 - 4 July	Executive Committee
4 - 9 July	Meeting of Advisory group
10 July	Executive Committee
17 - 19 September	Executive Committee
20 - 27 September	Central Committee

CLOSING ACTIONS

The Moderator thanked members of the Central Committee for their participation, and also expressed thanks to those who had looked after the practical arrangements for the meeting.

After the closing prayers, the Moderator declared adjourned the 42nd meeting of the Central Committee.

PARTICIPANTS

PRESIDIUM

Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard, Evangelical Lutheran Church in
Denmark (not present)

Bishop Vinton Anderson, African Methodist Episcopal Church,
USA

Bishop Leslie Boseto, United Church of Papua New Guinea and
the Solomon Islands

Mrs Priyanka Mendis, Church of Ceylon, Sri Lanka

His Beatitude Parthenios, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of
Alexandria (not present)

Rev. Eunice Santana, Presbyterian Church (USA), Puerto Rico

His Holiness Pope Shenouda, Coptic Orthodox Church, Egypt

Dr Aaron Tolen, Eglise Presbytérienne Camerounaise, Cameroon

OFFICERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Moderator

Archbishop Aram Keshishian, Armenian Apostolic Church
(Cilicia), Lebanon

Vice-Moderators

Ephorus Dr Soritua A. E. Nababan, Batak Protestant Christian
Church, Indonesia

Rev. Nélide Ritchie, Evangelical Methodist Church of
Argentina

General Secretary

Rev. Dr Emilio Castro, Methodist Church in Uruguay

MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Mrs Ruth Abraham, Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, Ethiopia
(18 February only)

Dr Charles Adams, Progressive National Baptist Convention,
USA

Ms Ahn Chu Hye, Korean Methodist Church

Mr Charles Ajalat, Patriarchate of Antioch, USA
 Rev. Levi Okang'a Akhura, African Church of the Holy Spirit,
 Kenya
 Rev. Ian Allsop, Churches of Christ in Australia (18 and 21
 February only)
 Bishop Ambrosius of Joensuu, Orthodox Church of Finland
 Rev. Andreas Anggui, Toraja Church, Indonesia
 OKR Walter Arnold, Evangelical Church in Germany
 Metropolitan Elias Audi, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of
 Antioch, Cyprus
 Rev. Fr Yuri Avvakumov, Russian Orthodox Church
 Bishop Paulo Ayres Mattos, Methodist Church of Brazil
 Mrs Khushnud Azariah, Church of Pakistan
 Mrs Kathryn Bannister, United Methodist Church, USA
 Metropolitan Bartholomew of Chalcedon, Ecumenical
 Patriarchate, Turkey
 Ms Nancy Basmajian, Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin),
 USA (18 February only)
 Barbara Bazett, Society of Friends, Canada
 Mrs Marion Best, United Church of Canada
 Rev. Martin Beukenhorst, United Protestant Church of Belgium
 Prof. Dr André Birmelé, Evangelical Church of the Augsburg
 Confession, Alsace and Lorraine, France
 Rev. Dr Karel Blei, Netherlands Reformed Church
 Ms Cristina Bosenberg, Evangelical Church of the River
 Plate, Argentina
 Archbishop Nerses Bozabaljian, Armenian Apostolic Church
 (Etchmiadzin)
 Rev. Violet Bredt, United Church of Zambia
 Mr John Briggs, Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland
 Most Rev. Edmond Browning, Episcopal Church USA (18 Feb. only)
 Bishop Björn Bue, Church of Norway
 Dr Alexei Buevsky, Russian Orthodox Church
 Mr Ari Carvalho, United Methodist Church, USA
 Mrs Gladys Chiwanga, Church of the Province of Tanzania
 Metropolitan Chrysanthos of Limassol, Church of Cyprus
 Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Peristerion, Church of Greece
 Professor Evanilza De Barros Correia, Episcopal Church of
 Brazil
 Rev. Dr Paul A. Crow, Jr., Christian Church (Disciples of
 Christ), USA
 Bishop Dr Kalman Csiha, Reformed Church of Romania
 (18 February only)
 Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina, Romanian
 Orthodox Church
 Ms Beatrice Danguah, Presbyterian Church of Ghana
 Metropolitan David of Sukhumi and Abkhazeti, Georgian
 Orthodox Church

Metropolitan Dometian of Vidin, Bulgarian Orthodox Church
 Mrs Edeltraud Engel, Evangelical Church in Germany
 Rev. Erasmo Farfan Figueroa, Pentecostal Mission Church,
 Chile
 Rev. Julio Francisco, Evangelical Congregational Church in
 Angola
 Mrs Olga Ganaba, Russian Orthodox Church
 Dr Maxine Garrett, Moravian Church (Northern Province), USA
 Mrs Virginia Gcabashe, Methodist Church of Southern Africa
 Prof. Dr Milan Gerka, Orthodox Church of Czechoslovakia
 Bishop Hans Gerny, Old Catholic Church of Switzerland
 Most Rev. John E. Ghose, Church of North India
 Archimandrite Theophilos Giannopoulos, Patriarchate of
 Jerusalem
 Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez, Church of the Province of the West
 Indies, Barbados
 Rev. Djiniyini Gondarra, Uniting Church in Australia
 Rt Rev. Brian Hannon, Church of Ireland
 Mrs Makiko Hirata, United Church of Christ in Japan
 Mr Béalo Houmbouy, Evangelical Church in New Caledonia and
 the Loyalty Islands
 Metropolitan Yohanna Gregorios Ibrahim, Syrian Orthodox
 Patriarchate of Antioch (18 February only)
 Miss Rosemary Iazard, Methodist Church, UK (18 February only)
 Mrs Marion Jaegers, Church of England, (Netherlands)
 Mrs Rosangela Jarjour, National Evangelical Synod of Syria
 and Lebanon
 Dr Mac Charles Jones, National Baptist Convention of America
 Bishop Dr Hans-Gernot Jung, Evangelical Church in Germany
 (18 February only)
 Mrs Nagula Kathindi, Church of the Province of South Africa
 Citoyen Tusange Katonia, Church of Christ in Zaire -
 Episcopal Baptist Community
 Rev. Dr Margot Kaessmann, Evangelical Church in Germany
 Rev. Edea Kidu, United Church in Papua New Guinea and the
 Solomon Islands
 Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk, Russian Orthodox Church
 Mr Dimitre Kirov, Bulgarian Orthodox Church
 Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, Orthodox Church in America
 Ms Wsiewolod Konach, Autocephalic Orthodox Church in Poland
 Prof. George Koshy, Church of South India
 Dr Günter Krusche, Federation of Evangelical Churches,
 Germany (18 February only)
 Dr Birgitta Larsson, Church of Sweden
 Dr Shirley Liddell, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, USA
 Mr Peter Lodberg, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark
 Dr Janice Love, United Methodist Church, USA

Mrs Jan Malpas, Anglican Church of Australia

Rev. Dr David Mandeng, Eglise Presbytérienne Camerounaise

Mrs Nadeja Mandysova, Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren

Miss Maryssa Mapanao, United Church of Christ in the
Philippines

Mr Andrew Elisa Mbugo, Episcopal Church of the Sudan

Rev. Hector Mendez, Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba

Dr Donald B. Miller, Church of the Brethren, USA

Rev. Dr A. Matitsoane Moseme, Lesotho Evangelical Church

Mr Michel Moukouyou-Kimbouala, Evangelical Church of the
Congo

Dr Irmela Müller-Stöver, Evangelical Church in Germany

Dr Edwin Mulder, Reformed Church in America (18 Feb. only)

Rev. John Mungania, Methodist Church in Kenya

Rev. Dr Thesiganesan Muttiah, Methodist Church, Sri Lanka

Mrs Faith Mwondha, Church of Uganda

Ms Margarita Neliubova, Russian Orthodox Church

Bishop Nifon of Ploiesti, Romanian Orthodox Church

Mrs Prakai Nontawasee, Church of Christ in Thailand

Mrs Christine Oettel, Federation of Evangelical Churches in
Germany

Rt Rev. Dr J. Henry Okullu, Church of the Province of Kenya

Bishop Amos A. Omodunbi, Methodist Church, Nigeria

Very Rev. Prof. Joseph Omoyajowo, Church of Nigeria

Rev. Dr Ruth Page, Church of Scotland

Prof. Dr Park Jong-Wha, Presbyterian Church in the Republic
of Korea

Bishop Maximo Tito E. Pasco, Philippine Independent Church

Prof. Constantine G. Patelos, Patriarchate of Alexandria,
Greece, (18 February only)

Rev. Rachel Paulin, Presbyterian Church of New Zealand

Metropolitan Jovan Pavlovic, Serbian Orthodox Church

Most Rev. Michael G. Peers, Anglican Church of Canada
(18 February only)

Archpriest Victor Petliuchenko, Russian Orthodox Church

Ms Aida Predele, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia

Rev. Jean Baptiste Rakotomaro, Malagasy Lutheran Church

Ms V. R. Vidhya Rani, United Evangelical Lutheran Churches
in India

Mrs Birgitta Rantakari, Evangelical Lutheran Church of
Finland

Mrs Violet Rhaburn, Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the
Americas, Panama (18 February only)

Rt Rev. Barry Rogerson, Church of England

Prof. John Romanides, Church of Greece

Rev. Dr William Rusch, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Rev. Heinrich Rusterholz, Swiss Protestant Church Federation

Rev. José da Silveira Salvador, Evangelical Presbyterian
 Church of Portugal
 Rev. Carlos Sanchez, Baptist Association of El Salvador
 Mrs Patricia Scoutas, Ecumenical Patriarchate, Australia
 Mrs Nenevi A. Seddoh, Evangelical Church of Togo
 Bishop Serapion, Coptic Orthodox Church, Egypt
 Rev. Dr Paul Sherry, United Church of Christ, USA
 Mrs Sri Winarti Soedjatmoko, East Java Christian Church,
 Indonesia
 Mr Harrys Sumbayak, Simalungun Protestant Christian Church,
 Indonesia
 Dr Bert Supit, Christian Evangelical Church in Minahasa,
 Indonesia
 Rev. Marianna Szabo, Lutheran Church in Hungary
 Bishop Jan Szarek, Evangelical Church of the Augsburg
 Confession in Poland
 Bishop Melvin Talbert, United Methodist Church, USA
 Rev. Laau Tanielu, Congregational Christian Church in Samoa
 Rev. Sela Taufatofua, Methodist Church in Tonga
 Dr Hesina Tetelepta, Protestant Church in the Moluccas,
 Indonesia
 Prof. Mary Thomas, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church, India
 Ms Kristine Thompson, Presbyterian Church (USA)
 Archbishop Timotheos, Ethiopian Orthodox Church
 Very Rev. Dr Georges Tsetsis, Ecumenical Patriarchate
 Rev. Dr Eugene Turner, Presbyterian Church (USA)
 Ms Anne Tveter, Church of Norway
 Rev. Michel Twagirayesu, Presbyterian Church of Rwanda
 Ms Denise E. Vazquez, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 Rev. Dr Janos Viczian, Baptist Union of Hungary (18 February
 only)
 Rev. Angelique Walker-Smith, National Baptist Convention USA
 Inc.
 Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss, American Baptist Churches, USA
 (18 February only)
 Rev. Elizabeth Welch, United Reformed Church in the UK
 Archbishop Bertil Werkstroem, Church of Sweden
 Rev. Martin J.R. Wessels, Moravian Church in Southern Africa
 (18 February only)
 Drs Aukje Westra, Reformed Churches in the Netherlands
 Mrs Tungane Williams, Cook Islands Christian Church
 Dr Markos Wolde Eyesus, Ethiopian Orthodox Church
 Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos, Mar Thoma Syrian Church of
 Malabar
 Rev. Maran Zau Yaw, Myanmar Baptist Convention (Burma)
 Rev. Amos Zita, Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
 (18 February only)

SUBSTITUTES

Ms Connie Gates American Baptist Churches, USA	for Rev. Dr Daniel Weiss (21-22 February)
Dr jur. (Ms) Helga Gilbert Evangelical Church in Germany	for Bishop Dr H.-G. Jung (21-22 February)
Rev. Michael Ingham Anglican Church of Canada	for Most Rev. Michael Peers (on 21 February)
Ms Anoush Nakashian Armenian Apostolic Church (Etchmiadzin)	for Ms Nancy Basmajian (21-22 February)
Rt Rev. James Ottley Episcopal Church USA	for Most Rev. E. Browning (21-22 February)
Ms Rhonda Pittman Church of the Brethren, USA	for Dr Donald Miller (22 February)
Rev. Staccato Powell Christian Methodist Episcopal Church USA	for Dr Shirley Liddell (22 February)
Rev. Dr Bruce W. Robbins United Methodist Church USA	for Bishop Melvin Talbert (22 February)

STAFF

Rev. Dr S. Wesley Ariarajah	Ms Rosemary Green
Ms Midge Béguin-Austin	Mr Francis Kanyoro
Mr Huibert van Beek	Dr Dan Kaseje
Ms Brigitta Botros	Mr Jan Kok
Ms Nan Braunschweiger	Mr Ninan Koshy
Mr Peter Brock	Dr Jacques Nicole
Rev. Joan Campbell	Ms Mercy Amba Oduyoye
Rev. Michael Davies	Mr Oh Jae Shik
Mr Tom Dorris	Dr Park Kyung-Seo
Mr Rob van Drimmelen	Rev. Clifford Payne
Rev. Dr Christopher Duraisingh	Rev. N. Barney Pityana
Rev. Dr Günther Gassmann	Dr John Pobee
Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson	Dr Klaus Poser

Mr Günther Rath
 Prof. Todor Sabev
 Ms Renate Sbeghen
 Rev. Carlos Sintado
 Ms Ruth Sovik
 Ms Jean Stromberg
 Ms Pilar Tosat-Delaraye
 Ms Ursula Zierl

Consultants

Ms Ruth Esche
 Ms Aruna Gnanadason

COOPTED STAFF

Rev. Anthony Coates
 Ms Donata Coleman
 Mr Martin Conway
 Ms Elisabeth Delmonte
 Ms Tomoko Evdokimoff
 Mr Robert Faerber

Mr Vassili Makhnev
 Ms Margaret Pater
 Ms Madeleine Richter
 Ms Evelyne Tatu
 Mr Mstislav Voskressensky

